

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill repeals section 631.0146 - which authorizes the presence of a supportive person for child witnesses in criminal cases involving child abuse, a crime of violence, or assault, and for adult witnesses in criminal sexual conduct cases. The latter is recodified in section 2. The former is replaced, in section 1, with provisions allowing a supportive person and comfort item for a child witness in all civil and criminal cases. In addition, it outlines appropriate questioning and testimony techniques for child witnesses. The court must consider the interests of the child and the rights of the defendant and whether granting a motion would unfairly prejudice the trier of fact.